

Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation



Release Notes - New Features

Version 9.1

Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation



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Note

Before using this information and the product it supports, read the information in "Notices" on page 17.

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This edition applies to the 9.1 Version of IBM Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation and to all subsequent releases and modifications until otherwise indicated in new editions.

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Chapter 1. Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation Release 9.1

Release 9.1 is the next version of IBM® Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation consisting of several feature enhancements that offer smarter order promising capabilities, decrease total cost of ownership and boost customer experience. In addition, it also includes stack certifications.

The following new features are added in Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation Release 9.1:

- Feature enhancements in IBM Sterling Distributed Order Management
- Feature enhancements in IBM Sterling Business Center
- Feature enhancement in IBM Sterling Sensitive Data Capture Server
- API Enhancements
- User Exit Enhancements
- Stack Certifications

Chapter 2. Feature Enhancements in Sterling Distributed Order Management

The following enhancements are included in IBM Sterling Distributed Order Management.

Multi-Hop Purchase and Transfer Orders

Enables a product to traverse through multiple distribution centers or nodes instead of a single procurement or shipment node. New features include the capability to compute an optimal path that a product can traverse to reach its destination when there are multiple paths, ability to calculate the final date of product delivery considering the multiple hops, lead times or transfer schedules, and the capability to track products and provide status updates.

Benefits

- Enhances customer experience through accurate order tracking and management.
- Reduces operational costs due to flexible supply chain configuration that ensures the use of an optimal shipment path.

Reverse Authorization

Facilitates automatic reversal and reauthorization of credit card authorization before its expiry date. New features include the ability to manually reverse and reauthorize an existing authorization to facilitate order modification, especially, order changes or cancellation, and the ability to reauthorize for a different amount when there is a mismatch between the settlement and the authorized amounts.

Benefits

- Primarily ensures compliance with credit card vendors' mandate since credit card vendors levy a penalty if the credit card authorizations expire naturally without explicit reversal.
- Results in cost savings since penalty to credit card companies can be avoided.
- Provides better control over customer's open-to-buy limit by ensuring authorizations do not exceed the total order amount.

Distance Based Product Sourcing

Allows a product to be sourced from a group of nodes or distribution centers, which are within the specified distance or radius from the customer's (ship-to) location. New features include configuration of distance radius, flexibility to specify different distance criteria for different sourcing rules, and the ability to create purchase orders or transfer orders as necessary.

Benefits

- Reduces shipping costs through the use of the most optimal node option.
- Results in efficient inventory cost management and inventory allocation to different nodes in the distribution group.

Multiple Inventory Items for A Selling Item

Allows a single selling item to be associated with multiple inventory items or Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) by creating a complex map of selling and inventory items. A product can have multiple suppliers with different SKU values. New features include the ability to search for a product based on the SKU value, obtaining inventory data at the SKU level, seamless order capture, and fulfillment.

Benefits

- Empowers suppliers or partners to upload inventory information at the SKU level.
- Product availability can be obtained across inventory items sharing the same GTIN number, which is more accurate.
- Provides accurate inventory data for order promising and scheduling.
- Offers high flexibility in vendor information management and logistics that ensures greater availability of products.

Real Time Availability Monitor (RTAM)

In previous releases, RTAM published availability data based on a standard calendar. This feature has been enhanced such that it publishes on-hand and future product inventory data for each node taking into account the node's business calendar and lead times. Not all nodes follow the same business calendar or have the same capacity or lead times. This feature accounts for this difference to produce a more accurate picture of availability, while computing the expected dates of product availability based on each node's lead time and the quantity ordered. New features include publishing of a matrix of quantities and available ship dates that can be used by any external e-Commerce application for order promising. RTAM can be configured to provide product availability for individual nodes or a distribution group.

Benefits

Enhances customer experience while providing accurate order delivery dates based on the quantity ordered.

Transfer Cost Enhancement

A product may be shipped from one node to another through inter-node transfers which involves transfer costs. Previously transfer costs for inter-node transfers were generic and was applicable to all transfers with the company. In this release, transfer costs can be set differently for different nodes considering different transfer schedules. New features include the flexibility of either using or overriding the generic transfer cost set at a landed cost level for select transfer schedules, and the ability to configure transfer costs in any currency for each unit.

Benefits

Reduces shipping costs due to accurate calculation of landed costs.

Carrier Selection User Exit

Many customers maintain carrier selection and routing logic externally, which is usually customized for a particular line of business. A new user exit, `processRoutingExternally`, has been provided that enables customers to use their own custom logic for obtaining carrier options based on physical attributes of the item, number of boxes in the shipment, and the Ship To address. New features include the ability to obtain landed cost, and other parameters that can be used for shipping cost optimization, and the capability to specify carrier options to shipments.

Benefits

- Enables customers to use their own custom routing and shipping options for optimal carrier selection.
- Reduces shipping costs.
- Improves order promising through computation of ship dates based on the carrier selection.

Sourcing Rules Enhancement

Currently, once an order line has been promised, the application does not consider further sourcing rules (when there are multiple sourcing rules configured) to source the already promised line. With this feature, the application can be configured to allow expansion of sourcing rules for including already promised lines, and to avoid expansion of sourcing rules to already promised lines if the items can be logically shipped together.

Benefits

- Offers greater flexibility to customers in specifying products that need to be shipped together from an optimal node.
- Reduces shipping costs by consolidating shipments together.
- Customers can ship products from their internal locations before contacting external sources.

Chapter 3. Feature Enhancements in Sterling Business Center

The following enhancements are included in IBM Sterling Business Center.

Pricing Rules for Provided Services

Previously, there was no way to associate provided services (such as installation or repair) to a pricing rule. They had to be dealt with manually. This feature offers the capability to associate provided services to a pricing rule, thereby enabling added services to be offered along with the order. A combination of pricing rules can be set to enable discounts on provided services associated with a product.

Benefits

- Offers greater flexibility to marketing and pricing managers when creating product promotions.
- Simplifies the pricing process.

Verifying Browser and Browser Version

Supports verification of the user's browser and browser version. When Sterling Business Center is launched, both the browser and the browser version are verified against the supported browsers and browser versions, and warning messages are displayed if there is a mismatch.

Benefits

Informs customers about unsupported browsers and browser versions and helps them avoid errors which may be caused by unsupported browser versions.

About Box Changes

The contents of the About dialog box in Sterling Business Center are modified to display both primary and additional information. The About Sterling Business Center dialog box primarily displays the application name and version, the IBM logo, and the copyright notice. A new button, **Additional Information** provides additional information such as name and version of other IBM applications installed.

Benefits

- Keeps the About dialog box contents clean and simple.
- Avoids confusing customers by not displaying too much information in a single window.

Approval Rule for Customer Rating

Allows administrators to define approval rules based on customer rating. The rating may be used in any quote approval flow where a customer rating is a factor. For instance, a sales person may be limited in the amount of discounts that can be offered to a customer, based on the customer's rating. Typically, the customer rating approval rule is applied when creating a quote in the IBM Sterling Field Sales application.

Benefits

Primarily aids sales personnel in business decision making by empowering them to provide quotes or discounts based on customer rating, which is smarter and quicker.

New Locale Specific Screens for Sentence-based Screens

New locale specific screens have been introduced to avoid translation issues, which may arise in screens that have sentence-based controls. The following list of new non-English locale specific screens have been introduced:

- Pricing Rule Summary screen
- Manual Pricing Rule Summary screen
- Coupon Summary screen
- Customer Entitlement screen
- Seller Entitlement screen

Existing screens for the English locale can be used for all the above screens.

Benefits

Aids in providing accurate translation and localization for customers in different locales.

Chapter 4. Feature Enhancement in IBM Sterling Sensitive Data Capture Server

Previously, the integration of Sterling Sensitive Data Capture Server (SSDCS) with Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation applications required a load balancer with Layer 7 routing for enabling transactions on different domains to succeed. In this release, the support to specify document.domain has been added, which enables customers to specify different sub domains within the network for an easier integration of applications.

Benefits

- Simplifies deployment of the application.
- Helps customers with a faster, smoother, and a seamless integration of SSDCS with the Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation applications.

Chapter 5. API Enhancements

The following API enhancements are included in Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation.

getATP API

Provides aggregated on-hand and future Available-To-Promise (ATP) product quantity in different nodes for available product models. Offers lot of flexibility to customers in search and selection of a particular model based on its physical attributes and to obtain accurate product availability data.

getInventorySnapshot API

Provides inventory information for a specific future supply type such as PO, PO_PLACED, or IN TRANSIT and can be configured to return inventory information in batches, which reduces memory consumption and improves performance.

getInventoryAudit API

The getInventoryAudit API which returns audit information for supply and demand, now supports pagination of results.

manageDistributionRule API

Currently several APIs are available to manage distribution group details but none to manage the distribution group at a header level. In this release, a new API, manageDistributionRule API, has been introduced to manage the distribution group header, which helps in managing large distribution groups.

manageOrganizationHierarchy API and getOrganizationHierarchy API

Both the APIs are enhanced to support addition, deletion, reading and modification of carrier service pickup schedules for a node.

Chapter 6. User Exit Enhancements

The following User Exit enhancements are included in Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Foundation.

OMPProcessRoutingExternally UE

Allows shipment and routing data of customers to be cached in an environment variable, which can be reused when required resulting in a smarter and quicker performance.

getAvailabilityCorrectionsForItemList UE

Accepts demand quantity in the input which can be customized to provide the correct number of node(s) to fulfill the demand.

RESERVATION_CHANGE Event

A new event, RESERVATION_CHANGE is now available for inventory change transaction, which when configured, will be triggered whenever there is a change in inventory reservation..

ON_SUCCESS_MANAGE_ORG_HIERARCHY Event

A new event, ON_SUCCESS_MANAGE_ORG_HIERARCHY Event will be raised during creation, modification and deletion of organizational hierarchy data. This is useful in configuring organization or node information across multiple instances of the application.

Chapter 7. Stack Certifications

The following are some of the enhancements made to the stack.

Database

- Oracle 11g R2, SQL Server 2008 are now supported.

Application Server

- Oracle WebLogic 11g is now supported.

Operating System

The following Operating system versions are now supported:

- RedHat 5.5
- Suse Linux 11

Browsers

The following browser and browser versions are now supported:

- IE8
- Firefox 3.6, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari in Sterling Field Sales and in Sterling Business Center

JavaScript Library

- Ext 3.0 is now supported in Sterling Business Center.

User Interfaces

- Bean based Web Services: Bean based Web Services allow easier integration with Sterling APIs through Web Services. Customers can use object based integration through Sterling APIs instead of exchanging XML strings that must be mapped to their internal objects.

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